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ABSTRACT

The model course content standards for foreign language instruction in Colorado's public schools, K-12, provide guidelines, not curriculum, for school districts to design language programs. An introductory section presents some basic considerations in program design. The two general standards for foreign language performance are that: (1) students will communicate in a foreign language while demonstrating literacy in all four essential skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and (2) students will acquire and use knowledge of other cultures while developing foreign language skills. Specific criteria for each of the language skills and cultural knowledge at each of three proficiency levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced) are then outlined. A brief glossary is appended. (MSE)

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COLORADO

ED 428 549

MODEL CONTENT STANDARDS

studiare una lingua | EINE SPRACHE LERNEN

学习汉语

learning a language

изучение языка

aprender una idioma | apprendre une langue

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

FL 025747

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Colorado Model Standards for Foreign Language

Task Force

Tom Maes, Superintendent, Adams County School District 1

Bob Linn, Distinguished Professor, University of Colorado

Julieta Bauserman (Spanish), Smoky Hill High School, Aurora

Randy Beauchamp (French), Highlands Ranch High School, Douglas County

Michele Bernadett, Foreign Language Specialist, Denver Public Schools

Michiko Bozic (Japanese), Littleton High School, Littleton

Patricia Brand (French), University of Colorado, Boulder

David Burrous (Russian), Standley Lake High School, Jefferson County

Chung-Hui Kuo Cheng (Chinese), University of Colorado, Boulder

Anne Marie Colwell (French), Broomfield Heights Middle School, Broomfield

Deloris Delapp (German), Hinkley High School, Aurora

Evelyna Donnelly (French/Russian), Colorado Department of Education

Julie Gonzales, Parent

Jan Herrera (Spanish), Thornton High School, Thornton

Eleanor Hoffman (French/All), University of Denver

Phyllis Hurley, Foreign Language and ESL Administrator, Colorado Springs 11

Barbara Meeker (French), Fruita Monument High School, Fruita

Terri McNeil (German), Foreign Language Administrator, Colorado Springs 11

Carol Murphy (Latin), Smoky Hill High School, Aurora

Nancy E. Oakes (French/ESL), Telluride Middle High School, Telluride

Joan Otoupalik (German), Cherry Creek High School, Englewood, Past President,

CCFLT
Diana Noonan (French), East High School, Denver

Arlene Ritenour (Spanish), Strasburg Elementary, Strasburg

Lynn Sandstedt (Spanish) , University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Past President, ACTFL

Martie Semmer (Spanish), Summit School District RE-1, Past President, CCFLT

Sharon Simpson (French), Colorado Springs 11

Patricia Sprock (Spanish), Greeley West High School, Greeley

Toni Theisen (French/Spanish), Loveland High School, Turner Middle School, Loveland

Ann Williams-Gascon (French), Metropolitan State College, Denver

Tom Wilson, Anderman-Smith International

Jim Witt (German), Grand Junction High School, Grand Junction

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INTRODUCTION

Colorado Model Content Standards for Foreign Language

This document puts forth a vision of excellence for K-12 foreign language education in Colorado. Foreign Language acquisition consists of building strong communication skills and cultural knowledge.

These **Colorado Model Content Standards for Foreign Language** are designed to provide guidelines (not curriculum) both for districts offering a K-12 foreign language program and for those offering a shorter program sequence. For districts using the K-12 approach, the benchmarks apply to grades K-4, 5-8, and 9-12. For others the benchmarks apply to the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. **These levels do not necessarily equate to years of study.**

Foreign Language literacy enables students to:

- connect with other disciplines such as language arts, math, science, geography, and the fine arts;
- acquire information and recognize viewpoints available only through the foreign language and its cultures; and
- understand the nature of language, both foreign and native.

Language study is best begun in kindergarten and continued without interruption through grade 12 and beyond. Research confirms that children easily and naturally acquire language at an early age. The degree of proficiency is directly proportional to the amount of time spent by students in meaningful study, with some languages requiring more time than others to attain the same degree of proficiency. Language learning can be accelerated through immersion in an environment where the language being learned is the primary means of communication, such as in the home, community, foreign exchange programs, and travel. The study of more than one foreign language throughout the educational process should be encouraged. Students studying foreign languages will have the opportunity to become linguistically and culturally prepared to interact successfully as citizens of our community, state, nation, and world.

All standards and their benchmarks have been examined and found to be assessable at the state level. The standards are of general nature in order to accommodate all of the foreign languages taught in Colorado. Before assessment can be addressed, proficiency levels by language and calibrated to grade levels and length of study will have to be developed.

Colorado Model Content Standards

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

1. **Students communicate in a foreign language while demonstrating literacy in all four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.**

2. **Students acquire and use knowledge of other cultures while developing foreign language skills.**

* A glossary of terms can be found at end of this document.

STANDARD 1: Students communicate in a foreign language while demonstrating literacy in all four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1.1 LISTENING
Students listen to and derive meaning from a variety of foreign language sources.

RATIONALE
Students listen to comprehend information spoken in a foreign language.

In order to meet this standard, a student will
- recognize common expressions;
- obtain meaning from diverse listening sources;
- demonstrate comprehension through appropriate responses; and
- engage in a variety of listening situations.

BEGINNING LEVEL or Grades K-4 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
At the beginning level, what students know and are able to do includes
- comprehending common memorized words, expressions, and cognates when hearing the foreign language spoken from a variety of sources; and
- demonstrating comprehension of everyday conversations including familiar situations and simple instruction.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL or Grades 5-8 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the intermediate level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes
- identifying the main idea from simple instructions or conversations, basic survival situations, and familiar topics, such as school, leisure time activities, and family life;
- obtaining meaning from simple conversations at a normal rate of speech; and
- identifying the main idea and/or specific information from a listening situation, live or recorded, such as stories, dialogue, films, songs, poems, plays, and conversations.

ADVANCED LEVEL or Grades 9-12 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the advanced level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes
- deriving meaning through context, intonation, and situations from listening sources including conversations, lectures, authentic videos, films, and recordings; and
- obtaining and processing information by selecting, categorizing, and analyzing from these sources.

For students extending their foreign language education, what they know and are able to do may include

- processing information by organizing, synthesizing, and evaluating from all types of authentic listening sources;
- integrating listening skills by interacting and/or participating with members of the community in various professions who use the foreign language; and
- using listening skills to interact culturally with peers and/or others in the foreign language.

1.2 SPEAKING
Students speak in the foreign language for a variety of purposes and for diverse audiences.

RATIONALE
The ability to speak other languages allows students to communicate with people from various cultures.

In order to meet this standard, a student will
- apply pronunciation rules and intonation patterns;
- use vocabulary, grammatical forms, and structures of the target language to convey meaning;
- apply knowledge of cultural practices to spoken language;
- express needs, tell stories, obtain and convey information, explain concepts and procedures, and persuade; and
- interact with speakers of the language in a variety of venues: personal, business, debate panels, dramatic presentations.

BEGINNING LEVEL or Grades K-4 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
At the beginning level, what students know and are able to do includes
- using learned pronunciation and intonation patterns;
- speaking in predictable, familiar situations using learned vocabulary and phrases;
- expressing personal opinions and desires with learned phrases;
- describing everyday topics using appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures; and
- asking and answering simple questions.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL or Grades 5-8 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the intermediate level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes
- applying pronunciation and intonation patterns;
- describing and narrating with learned vocabulary;
- expressing and justifying simple opinions;
- maintaining brief conversations on familiar topics; and
- asking and answering complex questions.

ADVANCED LEVEL or Grades 9-12 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the advanced level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- applying pronunciation and intonation patterns at a normal rate of speech;
- making predictions, analyzing, drawing conclusions, and expressing facts and opinions;
- defining points of view; and
- summarizing and paraphrasing.

For students extending their foreign language education, what they know and are able to do may include

- communicating and talking about topics of current, public, and personal interest; and
- handling complicated tasks such as describing, narrating, and hypothesizing with increasing accuracy.

1.3 READING
Students read and derive meaning from a variety of materials written in a foreign language.

RATIONALE

Reading in a foreign language gives students access to information, and expands their knowledge. This ability provides students with the opportunity to learn about cultures and the human experience.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- recognize words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical structures;
- demonstrate comprehension of reading materials written for a variety of purposes;
- use and apply the information gained from reading; and
- respond to the cultural elements contained in reading materials of the language.

BEGINNING LEVEL or Grades K-4 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program

At the beginning level, what students know and are able to do includes

- recognizing cognates and common expressions;
- inferring meaning of unfamiliar words from context;
- showing comprehension of reading materials; and
- identifying cultural elements found in reading materials.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL or Grades 5-8 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program

As students at the intermediate level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- comprehending main ideas of reading selections based on familiar vocabulary;
- responding to the reading selection; and
- analyzing cultural elements found in the reading materials.

ADVANCED LEVEL or Grades 9-12 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program

As students at the advanced level further extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing and synthesizing reading materials;

- recognizing the author's point of view and purpose;
- expressing personal reactions to reading materials; and
- interpreting cultural elements found in reading materials.

For students extending their foreign language education, what they know and are able to do may include
- using literary terminology accurately including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, and theme; and
- responding to and discussing a variety of authentic texts.

1.4 WRITING
Students write in a foreign language for a variety of purposes and for diverse audiences.

RATIONALE
Writing allows students to express themselves, to communicate with others, and to document ideas in a foreign language.

In order to meet this standard, students will
- write for purposes such as relating personal experiences, obtaining and conveying information, explaining ideas and opinions, and persuading;
- write for audiences such as peers, teachers, community members, and people from other countries;
- plan, draft, revise, proofread, and edit written communications;
- use correct grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization to convey meaning; and
- use legible handwriting and/or word processing.

BEGINNING LEVEL or Grades K-4 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
At the beginning level, what students know and are able to do includes
- writing about everyday topics and expressing personal opinions and desires using learned vocabulary phrases and grammatical structures;
- obtaining and reporting information for a variety of audiences;
- proofreading and rewriting their own work;
- using appropriate grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; and
- using legible handwriting and/or work processing.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL or Grades 5-8 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the intermediate level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes
- writing descriptions and narrations, and expressing and justifying opinions;
- obtaining and reporting factual information;
- developing and organizing ideas, planning, drafting, revising, proofreading, and editing their own work and that of other students, and
- using expanded vocabulary and complex grammatical structures.

ADVANCED LEVEL or Grades 9-12 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the advanced level further extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- analyzing and drawing conclusions;
- incorporating information from foreign language resource materials in their writing;
- selecting and expressing ideas and opinions on topics from various content areas; and
- using specialized vocabulary and more advanced grammatical structures;

For students extending their foreign language education, what they know and are able to do may include:

- writing business letters and/or advertisements;
- using writing skills to analyze, persuade and hypothesize with increasing accuracy; and
- writing creative poetry and short stories.

STANDARD 2: Students acquire and use knowledge of cultures while developing foreign language skills.

RATIONALE
Language learners are culture learners as well. Students need to develop an understanding of the cultures in which the language is spoken and the ability to function in an appropriate manner.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- demonstrate knowledge of aspects of foreign cultures such as daily life, education, history, geography, government, economics, and the arts;
- apply knowledge of cultural practices when communicating in a foreign language; and
- use the foreign language to access cultural information available only in that language.

BEGINNING LEVEL or Grades K-4 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
At the beginning level, what students know and are able to do includes

- observing and identifying everyday cultural practices;
- using culturally appropriate gestures and oral expressions for common or familiar classroom interactions; and
- listening to or reading materials in the language from the cultures being studied.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL or Grades 5-8 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the intermediate level extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- discussing components of the social patterns of the cultures being studied;
- using culturally appropriate language and gestures to interact with peers and

adults; and
- expressing themselves in writing in a culturally appropriate manner.

ADVANCED LEVEL or Grades 9-12 of a K-12 Foreign Language Program
As students at the advanced level further extend their knowledge,what they know and are able to do includes
- analyzing aspects of the cultures being studied, such as social and political institutions and laws;
- functioning in a culturally appropriate manner, through speaking and writing, in complex social and/or work situations; and
- researching a topic of interest using sources from the cultures being studied.

GLOSSARY

cognate - a word related (having a common origin) to one in another language.

comprehension - understanding of words and concepts

to convey - to communicate in words

to derive - to get by reasoning

diverse - dissimilar, varied

to hypothesize - to suppose

idiomatic expressions - expressions characteristic of a particular language

to infer - to guess the meaning

literacy - high quality of language use in all skill areas

to synthesize - to form an opinion by bringing together separate parts